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UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. REPORT.

BY- KEGLER, STANLEY B. AND OTHERS
UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUC. LAB. INC., ST. PAUL

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THIS REPORT DESCRIBES THE DEVELOPMENT, DIVISION, SERVICES, AND CORPORATE STRUCTURE OF THE UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, A NON-PROFIT REGIONAL LABORATORY DEVOTED TO CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS. MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND STATE COUNCILS OF THE MEMBER STATES, IOWA, MINNESOTA, NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, AND WISCONSIN, ARE LISTED. (DG)

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MAY 31 REPORT

to the

U. S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

File No. 1 - 1446

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EA 001 116

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Administrative Staff	i
Executive Committee	iii
Board of Trustees	iv
Development of the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory	1
Description of the Laboratory	4
Laboratory Focus	5
Divisions of the Laboratory	7
The Division of Development	7
The Division of Training	8
The Division of Research and Policy Studies	8
The Division of Information and Communication	9
Preparing a Proposal for UMREL Support	11
Other Services of the Laboratory	13
Corporate Structure of the Laboratory	15
Qualified State Councils	15
The Board of Trustees	16
The Executive Committee	16
The Administrative Committee	17
Chart of Corporate Structure	18
State Councils	19
Iowa State Project Development Committee	19
Minnesota State Project Development Committee	21
North Dakota State Project Development Committee	23
South Dakota State Project Development Committee	25
Wisconsin State Project Development Committee	27

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DEVELOPMENT OF

THE UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

The development of the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory began with the passage of Public Law 89-10, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which provides for grants "for research, surveys and demonstrations in the field of education ... and for the dissemination of information derived from educational research ..." in Title IV of the act. The general purpose of Public Law 89-10 is the strengthening and improvement of educational quality and educational opportunities in the nation's elementary and secondary schools.

During the summer of 1965, after discussions among individuals from several interested groups in Minnesota, preliminary discussions were held with representatives of the U. S. Office of Education. As a result, work was begun on a Prospectus, a committee was formed to provide a broad base of representation from educational and education-related groups in Minnesota and the Dakotas, and the Prospectus for a regional laboratory was submitted to the U. S. Office of Education in November, 1965.

During January, 1966, discussions continued between the Prospectus committee and the U. S. Office of Education. These discussions resulted in the determination of a region including the five states of Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Discussions were expanded to include groups in all five states, and a Program Development Grant was awarded in February, 1966, with the University of Minnesota serving as fiscal agent for the five-state group.

Groups within each of the states elected representatives to an Interstate Program Development Committee, which met during February to get the development project under way. Under the directorship of Dr. Stanley B. Kegler, associate dean of the College of Education at the University of Minnesota, the task of preparing a series of reports began. Professional staffs were established in each of the five states to oversee the work of project committees in those states, and a central staff at the University of Minnesota coordinated the project.

An Interim Report filed March 31 summarized the educational needs of the region, the philosophy of the five-state group, and the proposed operations of the laboratory. The May 1 Report of the project outlined the corporate structure of the laboratory--a not-for-profit corporation with a board of directors chosen from official committees within the states which represent a broad base of involvement by educational organizations, institutions, and agencies; lay organizations involved in education; business, labor, and industry; and cultural organizations. Also included in the May 1 Report was a budget proposal for the staff, facilities, and operation of the laboratory for a five-year period.

Representatives from a Midwest Laboratory Panel analyzed the Interim Report of the project and met with representatives of the project late in April. On the basis of their recommendations to the U. S. Office of Education and the May 1 Project Report, the U. S. Office of Education awarded a grant to the laboratory corporation, and the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory began operation June 1 in rented quarters in St. Paul.

Throughout the program development period, the efforts of individuals, institutions, and groups in the region established consensus and a spirit of cooperation which made it possible

to develop a regional corporation and laboratory structure in a three-month period. Many institutions in the region made it possible for staff members to be relieved of part or all of their professional duties to carry out the work of the project. In addition, other institutional and agency representatives devoted large amounts of time and effort to committee, conference, and task force operations. The development of the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory required, and received, a high degree of enthusiasm and cooperation throughout the five states.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LABORATORY

The Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc., is a not-for-profit corporation devoted to curriculum improvement in the elementary and secondary schools of Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Four divisions--the Development Division, the Training Division, the Research and Policy Studies Division, and the Information and Communication Division--make up the operating structure of the Laboratory.

The Laboratory corporation is governed by a 55-member board of Trustees from the five states in the region, and Laboratory programs are administered by a nine-person Executive Committee and the professional staff of the Laboratory.

Programs of the Laboratory are supported through contracts between the corporation and the U. S. Office of Education, and individual projects within the region are supported through contracts between the corporation and the institutions and agencies which undertake the projects. Through various projects throughout the five-state region, the Laboratory staff seeks to fulfill the commitments under Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

LABORATORY FOCUS

The Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc., seeks to improve elementary and secondary education in the five-state region by concentrating on curriculum development.

Through the Division of Development, the Laboratory assists schools in developing curriculums which reflect the needs of students in the region, incorporate current knowledge of the subject areas provided in the schools and current information and techniques from the psychology of learning, and develop logically and efficiently throughout the elementary and secondary programs of the schools.

Through the Division of Training, the Laboratory works to improve the ability of teachers to handle new and existing curriculums and provide effective learning situations.

Through the Division of Research and Policy Studies, the Laboratory gathers the basic information which is necessary to determine what kinds of projects should be undertaken and what systems should be used to report and implement the results of these projects.

Through the Division of Information and Communication, the Laboratory provides information about its own projects and other related studies, and collects and distributes up-to-date information about the talents and resources which are available in the region and nationally to assist teachers, school systems, and educational agencies in carrying out their efforts at curriculum improvement.

In carrying out its program of curriculum improvement, the Laboratory works with other institutions and agencies in the region. Its function is to assist existing organizations to undertake

programs which have implications for the entire region and which they would not otherwise be able to organize or support. The Laboratory is seen by its founders as a supporting and coordinating agency.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE LABORATORY

The Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory is organized in four divisions which supervise major areas of effort.

The Division of Development

The Division of Development is responsible for:

1. Identifying curricular problems not currently under study;
2. Identifying needs for adaptation of existing curricular materials in order to serve the schools of the region;
3. Establishing high priority projects in curriculum development and curriculum adaptation;
4. Developing a network of demonstration centers to facilitate the study of innovations in curriculum, instruction, and administration;
5. Administering a small-grants program for stimulating the use of new materials and procedures in the schools of the region.

In all projects undertaken by this division, the emphasis is on direct involvement of teachers and administrators in planning and building curricula to solve teaching problems which are characteristic of the region. The demonstration centers developed through this division will give classroom teachers opportunities to take active roles in working with new curricula. Any school in the region might become a demonstration center for a particular curriculum project. The small grants program will enable educational institutions and agencies to expand present projects as well as undertake new ones.

Division of Training

The Division of Training will be responsible for:

1. Arranging conferences on teacher education which are designed to relate existing programs to new developments and to foster cooperative planning between general and professional education;
2. Promoting in-service and continuing education programs for teachers;
3. Developing opportunities for the training of educational specialists needed in the region;
4. Making needed consultation services available to the schools.

Constant interaction of parties interested in the problems of elementary and secondary education is the goal of the program of conferences, symposia, and institutes. These meetings may be region-wide in nature or focused on the specific problems of a given district, agency, or institution. Through the consultation services, lines of communication will be established among educational organizations in the region, and the special talents of individuals and agencies in the region will be made available for individual projects. Services of this division will also be available to colleges and universities which seek assistance in their attempts to modify and improve teacher education programs.

Division of Research and Policy Studies

The Division of Research and Policy Studies will:

1. Carry out or arrange for studies needed by other divisions to support their work;
2. Examine the broad purposes of educational institutions and the general adequacy of existing programs;

3. Gather basic information about the status of curriculum development in the region;
4. Encourage the development of research aimed at providing better answers to questions asked by the schools about materials, instruction, school organization, finance, and administration.

Although this division will initiate some of its own studies through cooperation with existing research agencies in the region, it will be responsive to requests from the region for particular studies which can be shown to be useful in improving elementary and secondary education.

Division of Information and Communication

The Division of Information and Communication will be responsible for:

1. Gathering information and materials useful to schools and related agencies;
2. Placing such information and materials into the most useful forms;
3. Establishing lines of communication between the Laboratory and selected audiences;
4. Distributing available information to the appropriate audiences.

Current information about curriculum development, research findings, opportunities for observation and demonstration, teacher education programs, and technological innovations will be gathered, stored, and distributed by this division to facilitate educational planning, innovation, and decision-making. Eventually this division will have at its disposal the facilities provided by communication ties with other centers, educational clearing houses, research and development centers and nation-wide communication networks.

Laboratory projects may involve any one of the divisions of the Laboratory or the efforts of several of the divisions.

PREPARING A PROPOSAL FOR UMREL SUPPORT

Proposals for support of projects within the region will be evaluated according to two general criteria: whether the project does in fact appear likely to improve elementary or secondary education, and whether its results can be used elsewhere in the region. Beyond these qualifications, the staff and Executive Committee of the Laboratory will set priorities according to funds available, need for the kind of project proposed, and apparent promise of the individual proposal.

Since the staff of the Laboratory hopes to be able to assist in the preparation of proposals, highly structured guidelines do not exist. Instead, the Laboratory seeks proposal outlines, addressed to the director or the appropriate division officer, which contain the following information:

1. Statement of the Problem --What the applicant wants to do, when he wants to do it, and what significance the proposal has for the improvement of elementary/secondary education.

2. Hypotheses to be Tested --If the proposal involves research, what it hopes to discover.

3. Procedures to be Followed --How the applicant hopes to develop the project, and what personnel, facilities, and equipment are presently available.

4. Required Personnel --To what extent the Laboratory will be required to provide, directly or through financial support to the applicant, the skilled personnel necessary to the project.

5. Required Facilities or Equipment --What additional facilities or equipment will be required, either through direct provision to the applicant or through arrangement with other institutions or agencies which can supply services.

6. Budget Notes --What costs are anticipated for the project, for staff, facilities, equipment, office expenses, and other expenses such as required overhead. If the project is to extend beyond one year, the budget notes should be organized according to the Laboratory's fiscal year, which runs from June 1 to May 31, for each year of the project.

On the basis of this original proposal outline, the Laboratory staff will select projects which appear worthy of further consideration. Through direct contact with the applicant, proposals will then be refined. The skill and information available through the Laboratory will be used to prepare a final proposal, satisfactory to both the applicant and the Laboratory staff, which will then be submitted to the director and Executive Committee for consideration. Negotiation between the applicant and the Laboratory will be a process of modifying a basic proposal so that it will serve the purposes of both the Laboratory and the applicant.

In some cases, the proposal may involve financial support which is too great for the Laboratory to provide. Negotiation and proposal modification may then result in joint application by the original applicant and the Laboratory to other agencies, possibly including the U. S. Office of Education, which can support the project. In such cases, the proposal would have the support of the Laboratory in negotiation with the other agency, and the Laboratory might be responsible for partial funding of the project.

Further information concerning proposals for project support is available from the Laboratory for those who have specific questions to be answered.

OTHER SERVICES OF THE LABORATORY

Proposals for project support are only one way in which elementary and secondary schools and colleges engaged in teacher preparation may make use of the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Another important basic function of the Laboratory is dissemination of information concerning developments in curriculum and educational technology to schools in the region. As the Laboratory develops techniques and facilities for storage and summary of such information, it will be able to provide information and samples of new curricular plans on request. Regular communication with schools concerning the availability of such information and materials will begin immediately.

Another important feature of the Laboratory's Division of Information and Communication will be a Talents and Resources File, to be kept current at all times, which will make available the names of agencies, individuals, and institutions which can provide consultation and other services to schools in the region. As the file grows, schools and agencies in the region will be able to obtain specific information about where to seek assistance in their efforts to improve educational practices. Eventually, the Talents and Resources File will be an important component of the Laboratory's general effort to encourage interaction and cooperation between the many existing educational efforts in the region.

A Newsletter to schools and agencies in the region will be another important feature of the Laboratory. This Newsletter will inform subscribers of the current operations of the Laboratory,

projects in operation throughout the region, and services available to the institutions and agencies in the region, either directly through the Laboratory or through other agencies in the region.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE OF THE LABORATORY

The Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory is an independent, not-for-profit corporation for the five-state region. The corporation contracts with the U. S. Office of Education for its basic operating funds, but aside from funding, operating decisions are the responsibility of the corporation personnel. The structure of this corporation is comprised of four major parts: qualified state councils; the Board of Trustees; the Executive Committee; and the Administrative Committee.

Qualified State Councils

The State Councils for each of the five states are made up of 25 to 45 representatives from educational and education-related agencies. The councils include members from all levels of public and non-public education, state departments of education or public instruction, business and industry, school boards, arts and science councils, and other public and private organizations with an interest in education.

These councils will serve two major functions: they will provide the source for the designation of Trustees from all parts of the region; and they will provide an avenue of communication between the Laboratory management and the regional organizations and individuals of the region whose resources and energies must be mobilized by the Laboratory. Although the State Councils will not have a direct role in the formation of Laboratory policies or the management of Laboratory affairs, they are directly responsible for the nomination of members of the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is a 55-member governing body which establishes the general policy guidelines for the actions of the Laboratory. Each state council elects eight Trustees according to the following eight categories:

1. The Chief State School Officer of the state or a person he designates to represent him.
2. A public school administrator who shall be a superintendent, principal, or other major administrative officer in one of the public schools in the state.
3. An elementary or secondary school teacher from one of the public or non-public schools of the state.
4. A representative of the public higher education institutions of the state.
5. A representative of the non-public higher education institutions of the state.
6. A representative of the non-public elementary and secondary schools of the state.
7. A representative of teacher education programs in the state.
8. A representative of the public, who is not a professional educator, and who shall be active in one of the following agencies or institutions: state government, boards of education or other public educational agencies, business and industry, the arts, agriculture, labor, or the communication media.

These forty Trustees are then empowered to elect fifteen members-at-large, selected from a slate of candidates provided by the state councils, bringing the total membership to 55.

The Executive Committee

The Board of Trustees elects an Executive Committee from within its membership, and it is the Executive Committee which is responsible for the immediate operation of the Laboratory.

This committee is comprised of the chairman and vice chairman of the Board of Trustees, plus seven other elected members. There is at least one member from each state. When necessary for a widely representative base, the Executive Committee may appoint additional non-voting members to participate in its discussions.

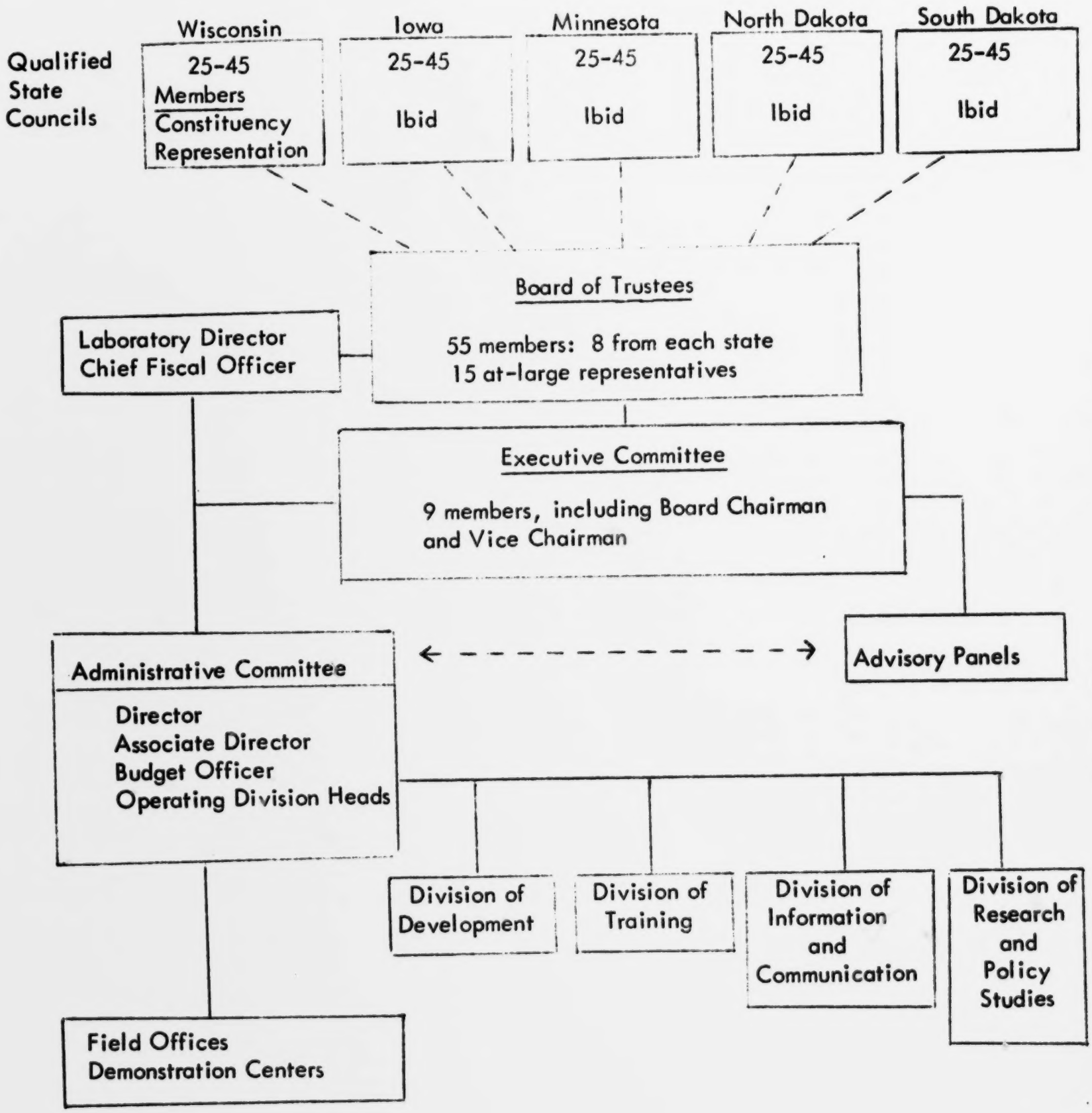
The Administrative Committee

The fourth part of the corporate structure, the Administrative Committee, includes the Laboratory Director, the Deputy Director, the Budget Officer, and the four Division Heads. These personnel, and the supportive personnel under them, are the salaried staff of the Laboratory, responsible for the day-to-day operations and reporting to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. Included in the responsibilities of this group are the staffing and operation of field offices, demonstration centers, and whatever advisory panels are necessary to the operation of the Laboratory.

The most important aspect of the corporate structure is the diversity of participation by people throughout the region who are concerned with the quality of elementary and secondary education. One of the purposes of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was to bring together a "new mix" of all the resources which might be brought to bear on the improvement of education. The corporate structure of the Laboratory was designed to guarantee that the wide range of communication and cooperation which established the Laboratory will be maintained when the Laboratory begins operations.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

THE UPPER MIDWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY



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